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General Assembly

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 122
Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Standards of accommodation for air travel

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on standards of accommodation for air travel for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 (A/56/426). During its consideration of the item, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General who provided additional information.

2. The report was submitted pursuant to General Assembly decisions 44/442 of 21 December 1989 and 46/450 of 20 December 1991, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to submit annual reports on standards of accommodation for air travel. The report also contains information on expenditure by the United Nations for first class and on meetings attended by eminent persons for whom exceptions have been made for first-class air travel, as requested by the Assembly in its decision 40/455 of 18 December 1985 and section XIII of its resolution 45/248 A of 21 December 1990.

3. As indicated in the report, the General Assembly, in its resolution 42/214 of 21 December 1987, inter alia, authorized the Secretary-General to exercise his discretion in making exceptions to allow first-class travel on a case-by-case basis. In accordance with administrative instruction ST/AI/2000/20 of 22 December 2000, business-class air travel may also, in certain circumstances, be authorized by the Secretary-General.

4. During the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001, the Secretary-General authorized 67 exceptions (37 cases of first-class air travel and 30 cases of business-class travel); the total additional costs incurred as a result of those exceptions amounted to $125,091 (see A/56/426, table 1).

5. As can be seen from tables 1 and 2 of the report of the Secretary-General, the number of exceptions granted for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 and the related costs are lower than those approved during the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 11 of the report

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that the reduction in the number of exceptions has been due to continuous administrative oversight. The Committee was further informed, during the hearings, that efforts were being made to streamline the procedures for the granting of exceptions with a view to further reducing the number of requests for exceptions and the related costs of administering the exceptions. **The Committee welcomes the streamlining of procedures as well as the reduction in the overall number of exceptions and their total costs during the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001.**

6. In connection with the list of eminent persons in annex III to the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee reiterates its comments, made in its earlier report (A/49/952, para. 17), that there is a need for clear criteria to determine the level of "eminency" of travellers and that such criteria should be applied to individuals rather than groups.

7. **With regard to exceptions on grounds of medical conditions, the Advisory Committee recommends that the granting of such exceptions should continue to be made on the merits of each case.**

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda items 43, 73, 74, 76, 82, 86 and 166

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Prevention of an arms race in outer space

General and complete disarmament

Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 15 November 2001 from the Permanent Representatives of India and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit the texts of the Moscow Declaration between the Russian Federation and India on International Terrorism (see annex I) and the Joint Statement of India and the Russian Federation on Strategic Issues, adopted on the basis of the results of the meeting in Moscow on 6 November 2001 between V. V. Putin, President of the Russian Federation, and A. B. Vajpayee, Prime Minister of the Republic of India (see annex II).

We would be grateful if the text of this letter and its annexes were distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 43, 73, 74, 76, 82, 86 and 166.

(*Signed*) Kamalesh **Sharma**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Sergey **Lavrov**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

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Annex I to the letter dated 15 November 2001 from the Permanent Representatives of India and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Moscow Declaration between the Russian Federation and India on International Terrorism

The Russian Federation and India affirm that international terrorism is a threat to peace and security, a grave violation of human rights and a crime against humanity. The struggle against international terrorism has become one of the priority tasks of the world community. This evil can be vanquished only by the combined efforts of all States.

Whatever the motives for their perpetration — political, ideological, philosophical, racial, ethnic, religious or any other — terrorist acts are unjustifiable.

The Russian Federation and India support the adoption on the basis of international law of decisive measures against all States, individuals, groups and organizations which support, harbour, finance, incite or train terrorists or promote terrorism. It is essential that all States, without exception, should pay particular attention to the prevention of the access of terrorists and extremist organizations and groups to financial resources on the basis of international law.

In multi-ethnic and democratic countries such as the Russian Federation and India, violent actions being perpetrated under the slogan of self-determination, in reality represent acts of terrorism which in most cases have strong international links. In addition, all acts and methods and practices of terrorism constitute a grave violation of the purposes and the principles of the United Nations, jeopardize friendly relations amongst States and are aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the democratic basis of society. Multi-ethnic and democratic societies are especially vulnerable to acts of terrorism which are an attack against the values and freedoms enshrined in such societies.

Fully resolved to develop cooperation in the struggle against the new challenges of international terrorism, inter alia in the fields of cybernetics and space, and in the nuclear, chemical, biological and other spheres, both sides noted the presence of close links between terrorism and the illegal traffic in narcotics, the trade in arms and organized crime and emphasized the need for close interaction at the bilateral and at the multilateral level in combating these challenges to international stability and security.

The Russian Federation and India are closely following the development of the situation in and around Afghanistan and emphasize the necessity of averting the spilling over of the conflict beyond the boundaries of one region and of preventing the further extension of terrorism. The two sides accord the highest priority to the continuation of effective interaction on Afghanistan within the framework of the Russian-Indian Joint Working Group on Afghanistan established between the two countries in October 2000.

The Russian Federation and India reaffirmed the central role of the United Nations in the efforts of the international community in the struggle against terrorism. They agreed that such a struggle must be conducted on the basis of international law including the Charter of the United Nations. In this connection, the

two sides called for the early completion of negotiations under United Nations auspices on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and the convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. The adoption of these conventions would assist in strengthening the international legal basis for effectively combating the global menace of terrorism.

Signed on 6 November 2001 at Moscow in two originals, each in the Russian, Hindi and English languages.

(*Signed*) V. **Putin**
President of the Russian Federation

(*Signed*) A. B. **Vajpayee**
Prime Minister of the Republic of India

Annex II to the letter dated 15 November 2001 from the Permanent Representatives of India and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint Statement of India and the Russian Federation on Strategic Issues

India and the Russian Federation, as strategic partners, reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate bilaterally and at the multilateral level on strategic issues for the development of a multi-polar world based on a new cooperative security order.

They noted that their bilateral relations of long-standing friendship, trust and confidence contribute to the strengthening of Eurasian stability and are a factor of global significance. They would continue their active cooperation in addressing issues of global and regional security, including threats posed by terrorism and extremism.

Dialogue and consultation among the countries concerned would be crucial in bringing about a new framework of security that would promote global peace and security and enhance stability. Both sides would undertake joint efforts, bilaterally and in multilateral forums, to promote this objective.

Both sides expressed their support for preserving the existing arms control and disarmament agreements, including the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.

The two sides consider as of priority importance the strengthening of regional and international security and they support progress towards general and complete disarmament, in particular by systematic and consistent efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally with the ultimate goal of eliminating such weapons.

They reaffirmed their support for the proposal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations noted in the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations for an international conference to address and effectively eliminate nuclear dangers and for the proposal to convene the fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

India welcomed the readiness of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to further reduce their strategic offensive weapons. India and the Russian Federation called upon other nuclear-weapon States also to join the process of nuclear reductions at an appropriate stage.

As original States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, both sides stressed their commitment to ensuring that the provisions of the Convention are fully and effectively implemented and called upon other States to do likewise.

Both sides called for continued international efforts aimed at concluding a universally acceptable, legally binding protocol to strengthen the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, of 1972.

The Russian Federation welcomed India's voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing and positively evaluated the Indian Government's efforts to develop a broad national consensus on the issue of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Both sides reiterated the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral forum for negotiations on disarmament and stressed that this body should respond to the global disarmament agenda through multilaterally negotiated and internationally and effectively verifiable disarmament agreements.

They stressed their readiness to work with others for an early commencement of negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on the banning of the future production of weapon-grade fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

With a view to preventing the militarization of outer space while at the same time preserving the use of outer space for the full range of cooperative, peaceful and developmental activities, both sides called upon the international community to make efforts to conclude appropriate legally binding instruments towards that end, including a comprehensive agreement on banning the deployment of weapons in outer space and on the non-use of force or the threat of the use of force against space objects.

They declared their readiness to work jointly with other States on the creation of a Global Control System for non-proliferation of missiles and missile technologies on a global, equal and non-discriminatory basis, under United Nations auspices. They attach special significance to the preparation of the report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the subject during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Both sides are determined to maintain and further strengthen their already effective and transparent systems of national export controls over dual-use materials and technologies in line with the objectives of non-proliferation in all its aspects, without adversely affecting the peaceful applications of such materials and technologies.

Both sides shall continue to consult on a regular basis on strategic issues.